Monday, January 6, 2014

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LONDON metro®

I'M SORRY, DID YOU JUST CALL ME A LIAR?

NO, THEY SAID YOU WERE FIRED. NOW WHAT? WE OUTLINE WHAT YOU SHOULD BE AWARE OF WHEN TRANSITIONING BETWEEN JOBS

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Calling E ... 47, that's E ... 47

A public participation meeting in London will discuss e-bingo after a pilot overseen by the provincial gaming corporation suggests a potential boon for taxpayers PAGE 3

Hey — shovel that snow elsewhere

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Need your weed? Hit the vice-principal's office, sonny

Calgary student allowed to smoke medical marijuana in school office PAGE 8

Normal School sale approved by province

Ready to go. YMCA about to start fundraising for heritage building takeover

MIKE DONACHIE
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It's looking good for the London Normal School after the province approved the sale of the heritage building.

It's been a long road for the Wortley Village treasure, and there's still a way to go before its new tenants — expected to be the YMCA — move in.

But the snappily-titled Notice of Completion of Consultation and Documentation Report issued by Infrastructure Ontario is a historic moment for the historic building.

The document, drawn up by the provincial agency's Erica Anderson, an environmental specialist, effectively ends the debate about the future of the Normal School.

It's the legal move needed before the 1898 building and its grounds can be sold. The city can now agree to a sale with the province, and the YMCA can move in.

A history

- The London Normal School was built in 1898 and opened its doors as a college for teachers in 1900.
- By 1958 it was a junior high school, then the offices of London's board of education in 1963.
- It became the offices of the Catholic school board in 1985, the same year it gained protection from the city and province as a heritage building.
- It's been empty since 2004, when the Catholic school board moved.

"It's a beautiful building," said Shaun Elliott, CEO of the YMCA of Western Ontario, adding this is the moment everyone has been waiting for.

The YMCA will be moving about 40 staff and a range of services into the Normal School, he explained.

If all goes according to plan, the organization will close two childcare centres and move them into the Elmwood Avenue East building, as well as its youth services programs.

The long history of education at the Normal School will continue, too, because the YMCA plans to run language classes for non-English speakers there. It also intends to make space available for community use.

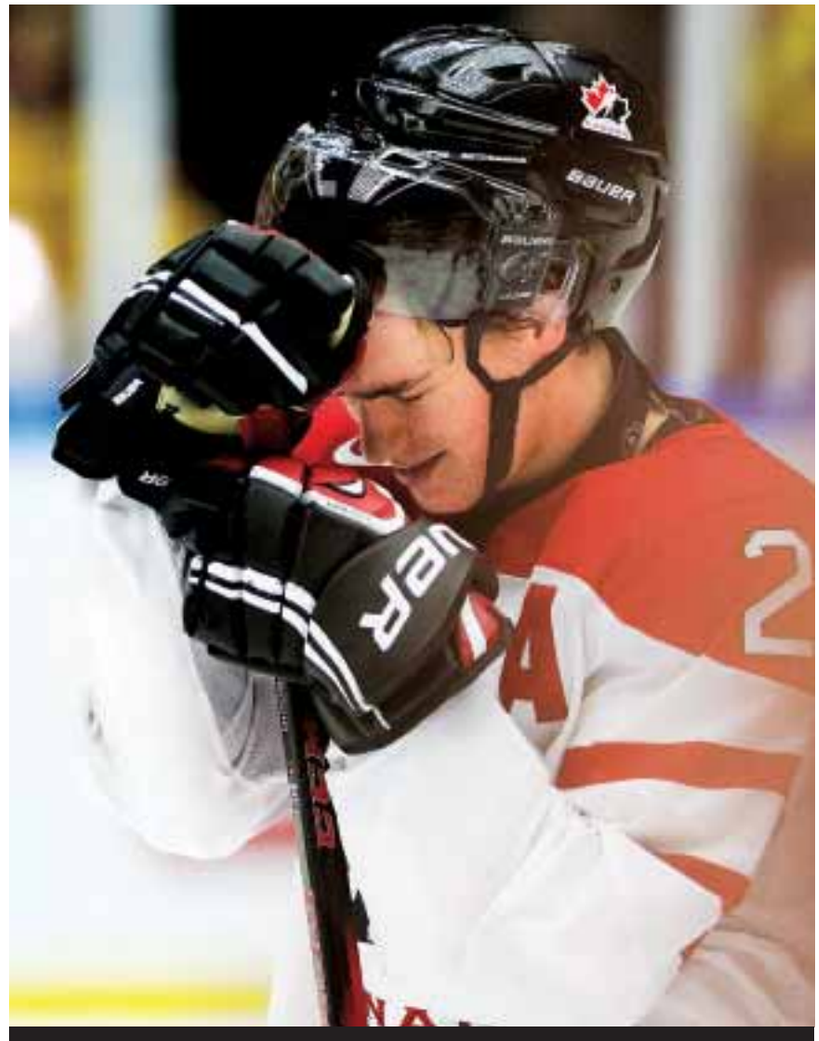
First, though, the YMCA needs to raise about $400,000 for equipment, furniture and other bills.

"We couldn't do anything until the province went through its process," said Elliott, adding that a fundraising campaign will be launched soon.

As for the other numbers involved, they're not yet known.

The province is required to sell the building for "fair market value" and negotiations with the city are under way. The final price will depend on the usual vagaries of the real estate system, and the city will then face a bill to upgrade wiring and for other improvements.

But the province approving the sale is a huge moment for the Normal School and the village, not least because it guarantees its five acres of grounds will be safeguarded for the community.



MISERY IN MALMO

Canada forward Jonathan Drouin reacts after losing 2-1 to Russia in Sunday's bronze medal game at the IIHF World Junior Hockey Championships in Malmo, Sweden. Story, page 18. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Bowl for Kids Sake

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Bowl for Kids Sake Event Dates:

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Sun. Feb. 23, 2014, 12pm-2pm

Tues. Feb 25, 2014, 7pm - 9 pm

Wed. Feb. 26, 2014, 7pm-9pm

Location: Palasad South (141 Pine Valley Blvd.)

To make a donation, or to sponsor a bowler, visit: www.bbbsola.org

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E-bingo could prove a win for London taxpayers: Report

Public meeting. Have your say Tuesday on the future of bingo

MIKE DONACHIE
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There could be a big win for the city and a local business if a high-tech gambling idea goes ahead.

And they're looking for opinions from the public on the issue at a special meeting Tuesday.

A public participation meeting will discuss electronic bingo, or e-bingo, as the corporate service committee meets at city hall at 1 p.m.

E-bingo is expanding in Ontario after a pilot overseen by the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation.

Windsor, Barrie, Sudbury, Kingston and Peterborough tried out electronic versions of the game, played on screens instead of the traditional paper. The idea is to attract more players, and that means more revenue from the city.

At a glance, based on a City of London report

- Bingo revenues for the city have been dropping. In 2006, it put $114,979 into the public purse but by 2012 the payout dropped to $69,340.
- The game gives 70 per cent back to players in prizes, with 2.1 per cent spent on marketing and the rest split between charities, the operator, the province and the municipality.
- Simply put, it gives the city 84 cents for every $100 of profit made in a bingo hall.

The last time e-bingo was discussed at city hall was back in May, and this is a long-promised public meeting, with invitations sent to charities, the OLG and bingo hall operators.

South London's Forest City Bingo Country, at 1106 Dearness Dr., has been earmarked for the modernization, but first the city must sign an agreement with the OLG.

It's a long-term commitment, lasting up to 16 years.

Any way you play can and will be used against you on the b-ball court

Just like the London Lightning, the city's cops became back-to-back basketball champions Sunday. They took on London's firefighters in a game at Budweiser Gardens, before the Lightning's annual Emergency Services Appreciation Game. The police repeated last year's victory, with a score of 44-26 this time around. The firefighters were also collecting donations for their boot drive, which benefits Muscular Dystrophy Canada. Both teams are pictured above. COURTESY KYLE MONTGOMERY

Keeping it quiet. Wooden noise wall favoured for Veterans Memorial Pkwy.

There's no barrier to building a noise barrier near Veterans Memorial Parkway, city staff has decided.

There may be plenty of noise from the road, but there's also been never-ending noise about the issue at city hall.

It's been back and forth for years and now, finally, a "noise attenuation wall" is being recommended at one of the loudest places in the area.

City staff say a wooden noise wall, to run from 151 Martinet Ave. to 272 Simpson Cres., would cost $500,000 and is part of the city budget to be debated between now and Feb. 27.

Projected price tag

$500K

City staff say a wooden noise wall would cost $500,000.

If all goes well, it will help residents enjoy their gardens despite the nearby traffic.

The new recommendation, part of the civic works committee agenda Monday, follows a delay after council asked staff to investigate other materials that might be used.

But those materials, including concrete and recycled PVC, would have meant far steeper costs, as much as $1.7 million, plus HST.

So staff have recommended a noise wall made of pressure-treated lumber because it's the only option that will meet the budget while still cutting the noise.

A report headed to the committee meeting doesn't give a timeline for the work, which will still need approval from city council.

MIKE DONACHIE/METRO

Stabbing. Man charged with attempted murder

A man arrested after a woman was stabbed last week on Viscount Road has been charged with attempted murder.

Police won't identify the accused or the victim because the case is being treated as an act of domestic violence.

Officers were called to 960 Viscount Rd. at 12:33 p.m. Thursday after neighbours heard a disturbance coming from an apartment on the third floor.

A young man said he tried to hold the suspect down until police arrived, and he was nearly stabbed. He sustained a minor injury.

The suspect then fell or jumped from an apartment window. He was taken to hospital and released into police custody Friday.

The woman received serious injuries.

Along with attempted murder, the suspect has been charged with overcoming resistance by choking, wearing a disguise in the commission of an offence and breach of probation.

Although criminal charges have been laid, the matter remains under investigation. SCOTT TAYLOR/METRO

Are you shovelling snow? You might be breaking the law

She's doing it right: Kim Grant keeps the snow on her own property as she shovels Sunday at her Becher Street home. City staff are warning that people who dump snow on the road are breaking the law. MIKE DONACHIE/METRO

Clearing it away. City staff warn against leaving snow on the roadway

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The snow keeps falling, and people keep shovelling.

Meanwhile, the city has a message for everyone. Apparently, some people have been breaking the law.

City staff are pointing to laws governing "snow dumping," including a reminder that people should not shovel snow onto the road.

The frigid faux pas is on the agenda for Monday's civic works committee meeting, as a staff report answers a question from Coun. Denise Brown, who raised the issue of deep wheel ruts in the snow.

Supported by Coun. Joni Baechler, Brown asked why the city pays attention to potholes in the spring but doesn't target winter snow ruts, which can damage vehicles in the same way.

The answer is that plows can leave packed snow, so drivers should take care.

Connected to that was Brown's question about some residents leaving snow in the road, and staff have said the Highway Traffic Act and a city bylaw ban people from putting snow or ice from their property onto the public road.

Old man winter

- London was expected to be hit with 10 to 15 centimetres of snow along with freezing rain Sunday night into Monday morning.
- The weather forecast for Monday includes more flurries, plus more for Tuesday and again later in the week.

Court settlement.

Bonuses restored for eHealth employees

Employees at eHealth Ontario will share $2.3 million in performance bonuses in the wake of a court settlement that restored payouts cancelled amid controversy in 2011.

A total of 704 staff at the provincial agency tasked with creating electronic health records for every Ontarian will get between $500 and $7,000 each at a time when Premier Kathleen Wynne's minority Liberal government is struggling to erase an $11.7 billion deficit.

A memo went to all 875 eHealth employees last week, many of them information technology experts.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Raising awareness

Get manly for Manuary

Those wanting to do some good — and look manly doing it — can hop right into the month of Manuary.

Much like what Movember did for moustaches and prostate cancer, men are being encouraged to grow out their beards this month to raise awareness about and money for head and neck cancer.

The fundraising campaign first started in London four years ago, and participants can sign up online to show off their facial hair and earn sponsors.

And it's not just exclusive to men. Women can also upload their photos and give themselves their very own beard with an online app.

More information is available at manuary.ca.

DAVID INGRAM/FOR METRO

Bruce Trail conqueror can't sit still

Graham Fowler and his constant companion, Lila, at the end of his charity walk. CONTRIBUTED

Graham Fowler only just got home from his remarkable charity walk, but already he's got itchy feet.

The London man is believed to be the first person to walk the province's Bruce Trail twice — like Bilbo Baggins, he went there and back again — and it was all for a good cause.

The 32-year-old was raising money in memory of his grandmother, Sara Rie Larson. She volunteered with the Boys and Girls Club in the city for 25 years, and now a bursary fund has been set up in her name.

But despite the success of the trek that ended on Christmas Eve, Fowler's thinking of his next step.

"This is, for us, just the beginning of what we're doing," said the apprentice bricklayer. "We're going to keep working at this and trying to build it up."

By "it," he means the fund that will help club members into post-secondary education.

Each year, an award of about $500 will go to a teenager heading to college or university.

In numbers

- **1,800 kilometres:** Distance walked by Graham Fowler on the Bruce Trail.
- **56 days:** Time it took to walk from Queenstown to Tobermory and back again.

And Fowler hopes that amount will increase after he does more fundraising. He's considering another walk and maybe some barbecues to put more in the pot.

"It feels great," said Fowler. "It's starting to feel better and better."

Physically, he's fine, despite a touch of lethargy when he finally stopped walking.

On Christmas Day, he found himself out of bed early and feeling like he should be tacking on a few more kilometres.

But, he said Sunday: "I'd say I'm back to normal now."

MIKE DONACHIE/METRO

Cut above the rest. Local prof chops her way to the top in Food Network fight

Fanshawe College professor Stephanie Brewster is a Chopped Canada champion after cooking her competition Thursday night on the TV show's premier episode.

Brewster won a tidy $10,000 on the Food Network Canada show, which airs Thursday nights.

The premise: chefs must race the clock and use all the skill and imagination they have to produce tasty meals from random ingredients.

They must make an appetizer, entrée and dessert. After each course is judged, one chef is sent packing.

Brewster was in rough waters Thursday against a private chef who has cooked for celebrities and royalty around the world, a chef de partie at Museum Tavern in Toronto and the executive chef at The Granite Restaurant in Bancroft, Ont.

In the episode, the chefs were challenged to create an appetizer using ingredients such as bone marrow, mac-and-cheese loaf and anchovy paste. The entrée round saw the competitors use five-spice powder, strawberry powder and tofu. In the dessert round, the two finalists created similar dishes, presenting their own interpretation of bread pudding.

Stephanie Brewster
CONTRIBUTED

Brewster said the lights, judges and competition were a little overwhelming, but that once she started thinking about the food itself she was able to take care of the business at hand.

"You start taking ingredients out of the box and put them on your board, and it's not until you start processing the products you have before the light goes on (that) you think, 'Maybe I can do this'" Brewster said.

Brewster said her winnings will go toward airfare for her two daughters in Germany so they can all see each other more often.

SCOTT TAYLOR/METRO

Minor injuries

Snowplow driver faces charges for striking teens: Cops

Police have charged a London snowplow driver who they say hit two teenagers over the weekend.

Investigators say it happened just before 6:30 p.m. Saturday as the plow left a parking lot. They say the plow was making a turn when it hit a 15-year-old boy and 14-year-old girl.

Both were taken to hospital with minor injuries.

Police say the driver is charged with making an unsafe turn.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Joni Baechler. Councillor leaving municipal politics

City Coun. Joni Baechler, whom many had picked as a possible candidate for mayor this year, is leaving municipal politics.

The Ward 5 councillor and planning committee chair says she wants to make way for new candidates to come forward and won't seek re-election in October.

Baechler has been on council for 14 years. She has no definite plans for the future, except that they will not involve city council.

Baechler said there was no single reason for her decision.

"It's a number of things," she said. "I think that 14 years has been a long enough time to be on council.

One life to live

"It's time for me to have other adventures."

Coun. Joni Baechler

"I'm mindful of councillors that make a career out of politics. I've never wanted to be that councillor."

Baechler added: "I think I would be untruthful if I didn't say there certainly has been a great degree of frustration over the past term on council.

"I haven't felt that we've really been progressing in any direction. That's really frustrating."

MIKE DONACHIE/METRO

Each one of these vials contains this year's flu vaccine, which officials have said is doing a fairly good job of protecting people from the H1N1 strain. METRO FILE

Flu season starts to grip London

H1N1 lingers. If you feel sick, don't try to tough it out — just stay home, local health unit pleads

SCOTT TAYLOR
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The Middlesex-London Health Unit says 20 people had to be hospitalized from Dec. 20 to 30 due to influenza, with H1N1 being the most predominant strain.

As of Dec. 30, there have been 55 reported cases of the flu and 28 hospitalizations locally this season. The health unit has also received reports of other respiratory and gastrointestinal illnesses circulating in the community.

Officials are urging people affected by the flu to stay home, rather than try to tough it out at work, because of the risk of spreading viruses.

Hospitalizations

28

As of Dec. 30, there have been 55 reported cases of the flu and 28 hospitalizations locally this season.

Flu symptoms range from sudden fever to cough, headaches, muscle aches, fatigue and sore throat. Symptoms of gastrointestinal illnesses include diarrhea, nausea, vomiting and stomach pain.

"People tend to get together with friends and family over the holidays, which can provide an opportunity for viruses to circulate," said Tristan Squire-Smith, manager of the health unit's infectious disease control team.

"Because these viruses can also spread in settings like schools, workplaces, hospitals, long-term care facilities, childcare centres and social gatherings, we're asking those who are sick to stay home until they feel well."

A look back

The 2012-13 flu season was an especially vicious one in Ontario.

- Two hundred and eighty people with laboratory-confirmed influenza cases died and 3,686 were hospitalized.
- Among those who died were four children aged one to four, according to Public Health Ontario.

Police building ready for release: Treasurer

Staff is recommending that the city cut ties with a vacant building in Lambeth.

The former London Police Service substation on Main Street should be sold, says treasurer Martin Hayward.

Hayward's report, asking that city council declare the building — and the land around it — surplus property, will be tabled during Monday's civic-works committee meeting.

"In recent years it has been underutilized and is in need of repair," the report says. "The London Police Service has determined there is no longer any operational value in maintaining the facility.

"It has therefore been removed from service and recommended for disposition."

Size

2,178

The property spans 2,178 square feet.

The city has looked into possible uses for the site but couldn't find any.

Staff has appraised it to set a price, which hasn't been revealed.

The former police building has a 28-foot frontage on Main Street. The single-story structure sits on about half of the city-owned property at the address. MIKE DONACHIE/METRO

Alberta, B.C. look into moving oilsands crude by rail: Report

'Viable alternative to pipeline movement.'
Environmental group calls idea 'underhanded,' says it raises safety questions in light of recent train accidents

A task force report has been handed in to the British Columbia and Alberta governments that examines the idea of transporting oilsands crude via rail if proposed pipelines don't get the green light, government documents show.

It's an idea the environmental group ForestEthics calls "underhanded."

It's a "backdoor way for industry to bring tankers to the coast without the same sort of public oversight or public process that we've had around the Enbridge pipeline or would have around the Kinder Morgan pipeline," said Ben West, campaign director for ForestEthics.

A joint provincial working group was announced by premiers Christy Clark and Alison Redford in July to develop recommendations related to energy exports and the opening of new export markets for products like bitumen for the two provinces, including pipeline and rail transport.

"Rail can be considered a viable alternative to pipeline movement based on costs of transport," the terms of reference for the group states. "If pipelines are not developed, rail will step into the void to deliver bitumen to the West Coast."

West said the report raises safety questions, especially in light of two recent high-profile train accidents.

Oil transport by rail has become a contentious topic after a train containing crude oil derailed and exploded in Lac-Mégantic, Que., in July, killing 47 people, and another train exploded without injuries last month in North Dakota.

"Myself and other people were pretty freaked out about what happened there," West said of the two fiery blasts.

The provincial working group was mandated to submit a report to both leaders by the end of December.

An Alberta government official did not respond to a question about the completion or release of the report, while an official in Clark's office said the report is complete but that no date has been set for a public release. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Details

The task force is led by Steve Carr, Deputy Minister of Natural Gas Development in B.C., and Grant Sprague, Deputy Minister of energy in Alberta.

'Big rate of increase'

More boreal forest protected, but challenges remain: Group

Canada has made significant strides in protecting the vast boreal forest that stretches across most of its provinces and territories, but the world's largest intact forest ecosystem still faces threats, says an environmental group.

The amount of boreal forest under some form of government protection has doubled since 2007 to about 12 per cent of the total area, biologist Jeff Wells of the Canadian Boreal Initiative said recently.

"That's a big rate of increase in a short time and we're hoping that's going to continue," he said.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

New Brunswick

Officials grappled with telling public about unsterilized forceps

Officials at New Brunswick's largest health authority deliberated for three months whether to inform the public about unsterilized biopsy forceps before finally releasing the information and advising patients to get tested for hepatitis and HIV last year.

Documents recently released outline how staff with the Horizon Health Network spent weeks trying to assess the risk to patients. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Midwest, Northeast braces for 'polar vortex'

A person struggles to cross a street in blowing and falling snow Sunday in St. Louis. While much of Canada was in a deep freeze, snow-covered roads, high winds and ice were creating dangerous driving conditions from the Midwest to the Northeast U.S. on Sunday ahead of a "polar vortex" — a counterclockwise-rotating pool of cold, dense air that is set to affect more than half of the continental U.S. throughout Sunday and into Monday and Tuesday, with wind chill warnings stretching from Montana to Alabama. JEFF ROBERSON/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

No injuries reported. Plane from Toronto slides off runway at N.Y. airport

A plane from Toronto slid into snow as it turned onto a taxiway after landing at John F. Kennedy International Airport on Sunday, halting flights at the airport for two hours and causing residual delays.

"It could have been worse, a much worse scenario," Jordan Houlton told reporters after he emerged from Delta Connection 4100 along with 34 other passengers and crew members about 90 minutes after the slippery diversion of the aircraft.

Federal Aviation Administration spokeswoman Kathleen Bergen said there was no immediate report of injuries after the plane landed safely at 8 a.m., only to lose its footing and slide into snow as it turned from the runway onto a taxiway.

The plane was then towed to a gate with passengers on board, she said.

The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, which operates the airport, said operations for domestic and international flights were suspended for about two hours because of slick runways, leaving passengers at crowded gates. Flights resumed after 10 a.m. on two of the airport's four runways, but residual delays for passengers were expected to linger.

The landing came two days after a major snowstorm dumped 15 centimetres of snow in New York City, forcing the cancellation of hundreds of flights and stranding passengers both in the city and throughout the world who were heading to New York. Passengers from cancelled flights continued to fill the few remaining seats on many planes already crowded by holiday travellers.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

N.L. blackouts. Premier calls for conservation during 'critical period'

Newfoundland and Labrador Premier Kathy Dunderdale says her government will be asking large consumers of energy to conserve power as the province grapples with power outages and rolling blackouts following a heavy storm.

Dunderdale said energy conservation would be paramount in the coming weeks and large consumers of energy will be asked to close or reduce operations over the next few days.

"We're looking at customers in the province who use a lot of electricity ... and see if we can have access to that power over the next number of days until we get through this critical period," said Dunderdale at a news conference in St. John's. "But everybody has a role to play in this. THE CANADIAN PRESS

A member of the al-Qaida-linked Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) gives a lecture at an engineering college in the northern city of Raqqa, Syria. ISIL and rival rebels clashed in Syria on Sunday, undermining the broader opposition movement to oust President Bashar Assad. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

Syrian rebels, al-Qaida-linked group at odds

Opposition. Bloody fighting that began Friday expands over the weekend

Syrian opposition fighters battled rival rebels from an al-Qaida-linked faction across parts of northern Syria on Sunday, as deep fissures within the insurgency erupted into some of the most serious and sustained violence between groups opposed to President Bashar Assad since the country's conflict began.

The clashes, which broke out on Friday and have spread to parts of four provinces, pit an array of moderate and ultraconservative Islamist brigades against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, an extremist group that has become both feared and resented in parts of opposition-held areas for trying to impose its hardline interpretation of Islam.

The fighting did not appear to be a turn in unison by Syrian rebel groups against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, activists and analysts said, but rather an outburst of violence against the al-Qaida-linked group in certain communities where tensions with other opposition factions were already simmering.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Brutality

- Some in northern Syria originally welcomed the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant for imposing a degree of order on the villages and towns that fell under its control. But the group alienated many by employing tactics deemed brutal even by the standards of Syria's bloody conflict. Its fighters have beheaded captured government fighters and kidnapped anti-Assad activists, journalists and civilians seen as critical of its rule.

India. Survivors sought after building collapses

Rescuers using backhoes and shovels searched for survivors Sunday under a massive pile of broken concrete and dust that was left when a residential building under construction collapsed in southern India, killing at least 15 workers.

Authorities suspected dozens more may be trapped under the rubble, but were still trying to determine how many workers were on site when the five-storey structure crumpled Saturday afternoon in the state of Goa. Witnesses reported seeing at least 40 workers.

Soldiers and firefighters listened for movement or cries from the wreckage as they worked overnight to clear the debris, state official Venancio Furtado said.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Czech Republic

Illegal weapons found after blast

A total of 12 illegal weapons were found at the Palestinian embassy complex in Prague where a possible booby-trapped safe killed the ambassador, police said Sunday.

The deputy Palestinian foreign minister, however, denied the weapons were illegal.

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Student allowed to use medicinal pot in the vice-principal's office

Marijuana vaporizer. Noah Kirkman's device is no bigger than a walkie-talkie

JEREMY NOLAIS
Metro in Calgary

Smoking marijuana on school property would land most high schoolers in the principal's office, but Noah Kirkman is actually encouraged to head there and ingest the drug.

The 15-year-old Western Canada High School student is a licensed medicinal marijuana user after finding the drug far more effective than prescription offerings for treating Tourette Syndrome and attention-deficit disorder.

"It doesn't have any withdrawal effects and I can't (overdose) on it," explained the confident student, who has aspirations of practising photojournalism someday. "It helps me keep calm; it helps me keep focused."

Kirkman received his licence in September and he and mother Lisa say they proactively approached Calgary Board of Education administrators to discuss terms on how the teen could ingest his medicine on school property.

At first, it was thought Kirkman could use his "one-hitter," which looks like a cigarette, out front of the school. But when it became too cold it was agreed he could pop by the vice-principal's office and use his marijuana vaporizer three times a day, before class, after class and over the lunch hour.

Kirkman's device is no bigger than a walkie-talkie and he simply flicks a switch that heats his medicine to 367 F.

The CBE would not confirm the Kirkman family's account, citing privacy concerns, and said it doesn't have information to indicate whether other students have been granted similar concessions to use marijuana on school property. But Kirkman and his mom were interviewed separately to determine whether their accounts check out and Metro was provided with proof of the teen's medicinal marijuana licence.

Lisa is also a licensed marijuana user and no stranger to generating headlines for her use of the drug. In 2011, she and three others ingested marijuana using a vaporizer aboard a WestJet flight bound for Toronto.

Noah Kirkman's vaporizer, which he uses inside his Calgary high school. COURTESY NOAH KIRKMAN

Elizabeth Howell is seen here in this photo taken on Saturday, en route to the Mars Desert Research Station near Hanksville, Utah. CONTRIBUTED

The Martian Chronicles: Ottawa woman researches life on Mars

An Ottawa woman is living like a Martian for the next two weeks in a Utah desert research facility designed to simulate life on the red planet.

Elizabeth Howell, a Carleton University graduate and aerospace science PhD student in North Dakota, joins a six-member crew in the Mars Desert Research Station near Hanksville, Utah. One crew member is from France and four are from the U.S.

The MDRS is a two-floor, 1,200 square foot facility, equipped with bathrooms, bedrooms, and ladders to access a common area. Unable to speak by phone Sunday, she wrote in an email to Metro that her living arrangement is like staying at a cabin, but with a space twist.

"It's powered by generators, we have limited running water, and we leave the habitat in groups of at least two for safety reasons," wrote Howell. "The twist is that once we enter the simulation, we generally only wear spacesuits while we're outside. That's because on Mars, you would need a spacesuit to survive."

Howell was selected to participate in the program run by the not-for-profit group, The Mars Society, until Jan. 20. She is also a freelance journalist for several science publications.

She will act as an observer and document her journey for Space.com as well as gather information for the crew's experiments.

While she said she believes humans will one day inhabit Mars, she's not interested in being one of them if it means there's no return flight home.

Christy Foley, a 32-year-old Edmonton woman (see sidebar), is one of the latest to make the short list for a one-way trip to Mars in 2024 through The Mars One Project, developed by Dutch space entrepreneur Bas Landorp.

Howell is also tweeting about her experience at twitter.com/howellspace.

JOE LOFARO/METRO IN OTTAWA

MARS ONE: SNAPSHOTS

Seventy-five Canadians were among 1,058 shortlisted candidates for a one-way ticket to Mars in a colonizing mission being organized by Mars One, a Dutch not-for-profit foundation. Here's a look at one of the possible "human ambassadors on Mars."

LEAH GERMAIN/METRO IN EDMONTON

To infinity and beyond!

Edmonton's Christy Foley, 32, and her husband both applied for Mars One.

"I've always loved space and the idea of colonizing and expanding," said Foley, who works for the Alberta government. "I grew up on Star Trek Next Generation, which makes me a bit of a nerd."

While Foley was shortlisted, her husband was not. "It was definitely disappointing," Foley admitted. "He was ecstatic that I was picked and I love him for it."

Foley said her husband plans on continuing to apply for future applications for the mission.

"I think what I will miss the most is the ability to go out in nature," Foley said about the possibility of a one-way ticket to Mars. "We will be surrounded by machines forever. Though, part of the plan is to develop our own farms and orchards, so I hopefully won't have to miss the feel of nature for long."

Foley said thanks to volunteer work with the Girl Guides of Canada, she has a great sense of leadership and extensive experience with first aid.

Foley will have to complete a medical examination and have a "job interview" as part of the four-round selection process.

She expects the process to be complete by 2016, with training kicking off for the selected few in 2017 and a departure date set for 2024.

"It's definitely not going to happen tomorrow," she laughed. "I will get to enjoy some time with my family while I am here."

‘Click farms’ sow big social media numbers

‘The dark side.’ Making it look like you’ve won friends and influenced people has become big business

Celebrities, businesses and even the U.S. State Department have bought bogus Facebook likes, Twitter followers or YouTube viewers from offshore “click farms,” where workers tap, tap, tap the thumbs up button, view videos or retweet comments to inflate social media numbers.

Since Facebook launched almost 10 years ago, users have sought to expand their social networks for financial gain, winning friends, bragging rights and professional clout. And social media companies cite the levels of engagement to tout their value.

“Click farms” inflate social media numbers, such as Facebook likes. STEPHEN LAM/GETTY IMAGES

But an Associated Press examination has found a growing global marketplace for fake clicks, which tech companies struggle to police. Online records, industry studies and interviews show companies are capitalizing on the opportunity to make millions of dollars by duping social media.

For as little as a half cent each click, websites hawk everything from LinkedIn connections to make members appear more employable to SoundCloud plays to influence record label interest.

“Anytime there’s a monetary value added to clicks, there’s going to be people going to the dark side,” said Mitul Gandhi, CEO of seoClarity, a Des Plaines, Ill., social media marketing firm that weeds out phoney online engagements.

Italian security researchers and bloggers Andrea Stroppa and Carla De Micheli estimated in 2013 that sales of fake Twitter followers have the potential to bring in $40 million US to $360 million US to date, and that fake Facebook activities bring in $200 million US a year.

As a result, many firms, whose values are based on credibility, have entire teams doggedly pursuing the buyers and brokers of fake clicks. But each time they crack down on one, another, more creative scheme emerges.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Five ‘click farm’ facts

1. A click farm is a business that sells clicks for fans, likes, followers, views and more.
2. People buy clicks to boost their social media numbers, which can lead to profits and popularity.
3. Buying and selling clicks violates social media user rules but is not regulated by U.S. state or federal agencies.
4. Click farm revenues are estimated to be worth hundreds of millions.
5. Sellers offer clicks for Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, Pinterest, SoundCloud, YouTube, Vimeo and more.

Trend. Wearable gadgets set to take centre stage in 2014

Will 2014 be remembered as the year wearable computing took off?

Upstart entrepreneurs and major manufacturers such as Samsung, Qualcomm and Sony certainly hope so.

Gadgets that you snap, buckle or fasten to your body are already marketed to fitness freaks obsessed with tracking every possible bit of data about their workout. There are countless smartwatches for tech nerds who’d rather glance at their wrists to check messages than reach for their smartphones. And thousands of people are already seeing the world differently with the help of the Internet-connected eyewear, Google Glass.

Technology companies will stretch the wearable concept further this week in Las Vegas at the International CES event, the industry’s annual trade show. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Attendees wear Google Glass while posing for a group photo during the Google I/O developer conference in May in San Francisco. JUSTIN SULLIVAN/GETTY IMAGES

Bluefin tuna swim into dangerous waters

Sushi restaurateur Kiyoshi Kimura poses with a 230-kilogram bluefin tuna he bought at an auction before cutting it at his restaurant near Tsukiji fish market in Tokyo on Sunday. Kimura paid 7.36 million yen (about $70,000 US) for the bluefin tuna in the year’s celebratory first auction, just one-twentieth of what he paid a year earlier despite signs the species is in serious decline. Environmentalists say growing worldwide consumption of bluefin tuna is leading to its depletion, and that those in charge of managing fisheries for the species are failing to take responsible action to protect it. Japanese eat about 80 per cent of all bluefin tuna caught worldwide, though demand is growing as others acquire a taste for the tender, pink and red flesh of the torpedo-shaped speedsters of the sea. Stocks of all three bluefin species — the Pacific, Southern and Atlantic — have fallen over the past 15 years amid overfishing. Stocks of bluefin caught in the Atlantic and Mediterranean plunged by 60 per cent between 1997 and 2007 due to rampant, often illegal, overfishing and lax quotas. SHIZUO KAMBAYASHI/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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NUTBARS NEED NOT APPLY

URBAN COMPASS

Todd Devlin
london@metronews.ca

As the calendar turned to 2014 last week, London's mayoral and city council races officially began, and it didn't take long for some action down at city hall with nearly a dozen applicants filing papers on Day 1.

Aside from eager beaver incumbents Denise Brown and Stephen Orser, the rest of those who filed on the first day were political newbies with visions of unseating the current council member in their respective wards. There was talk of "change" and of a need for "real people" in "real communities" to get the city moving in the right direction.

In other words, it sounded a lot like the last election cycle. How did that one turn out again? Oh yes, with a mayor facing criminal charges, back-room meetings that prompted ombudsman investigations, and seemingly endless examples of council members displaying just how out-of-touch they are with the average Londoner.

The public needn't look any further than the mere existence of a "group of eight" (a voting bloc that includes Mayor Joe Fontana) to realize that a majority of council simply doesn't have the well-being of its citizens in mind. It's more like an episode of Survivor or a glimpse inside a high-school cafeteria. Neither offer good examples of how to run a city.

Maybe this is why Coun. Joni Baechler has decided not to run again. If so, I certainly wouldn't blame her.

Baechler, a well-respected politician, was rumoured to be a possible mayoral candidate in 2014. But alas, the 14-year council veteran has had enough. I can't believe she lasted 14 years.

Today's political climate simply isn't conducive to attracting quality candidates. London has no shortage of bright citizens with the right mixture of skills and life experience to do a fine job down at city hall.

The problem is, very few of them will run. They're leaders in business, health care, education and the non-profit sector. And when election time comes, they're on the sidelines.

There are three types of people who run for office.

The first is the bright, conscientious citizen looking to make a real difference in the community. I don't think it'll surprise you to hear this person is the minority. And, sadly, it doesn't take long for this person to become jaded by the "game" of politics, where it's not easy to maintain one's integrity.

And so we're left with the other two types, primarily the power-thirsty individual (who has all the answers). They're tireless self-promoters and love seeing their name in lights. Unfortunately, they're in it for the wrong reasons.

The third type, for lack of a better term, is the "nutbar," who runs on a bizarre platform like creating a new currency or building a monorail. Please don't vote for this person.

Now, I'm not saying it's all doom and gloom. I encourage all quality candidates (the first type described above) to throw their hats into the ring. Democracy, after all, is still our best hope. Or, as Winston Churchill once said: "Democracy is the worst form of government … except all the others."

Follow Todd Devlin on Twitter @UrbanCompassLdn

ZOOM

Here fishy, fishy, fishy

CHUNG SUNG-JUN/GETTY IMAGES

South Korean festival gets off to icy start

A child casts a line through a hole into a frozen river during an ice fishing competition at the Hwacheon Sancheoneo Ice Festival over the weekend in Hwacheon-gun, South Korea.

The annual event attracts thousands of visitors and features a mountain trout ice fishing competition in which participants compete with traditional lures or with bare hands.

The festival is a big deal for the country. It was recently selected as one of the representative festivals by the South Korean government and CNN declared it one of the seven winter wonders in 2011.

GETTY IMAGES

Running through Jan. 26

- The exhibits include the Ice Sculpture Park, Michelangelo Special Exhibition and the 3-D Digital Gallery.
- In addition to ice fishing, there is also sleigh-riding, snow-sledding, and a daily ice show.

An angler's catch of the day.
GETTY IMAGES

Clickbait

ANDREW FIFIELD
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CONTRIBUTED

Bandcamp is an online store that allows music fans to purchase albums directly from the artist, often allowing purchasers to name their price. But wait! There's more! You can also preview albums in their entirety before buying. It's a can't-miss proposition, so swing by and check out these Canadian artists.

The Royal Streets:
Relentlessly pleasant acoustic pop music, buoyed by plenty of cooing and a classic rock flavour. It's the type of music you'll often come across in coffee shops, complete with the gentle, raspy voice and quiet crash cymbals. Sunday morning music, in other words.
(theroyalstreets.bandcamp.com)

Sean Nicholas Savage:
There's a staggering amount of music on this Montreal musician's page, and it's always hard to find a "skippable" song in the bunch. Sunny pop, piano ballads, moody electro. It's all here. A prolific writer and a busy tourer, there's a good chance he'll be in your town sometime this year.
(seannicholassavage.bandcamp.com)

Jonathan Atkins:
A singer-songwriter with a devastating ear for harmonies and a delicate touch with lyrics that slide perfectly into a horrid winter. There's a definite Celtic touch, but far sweeter than something like Mumford and Sons.
(jonathanatkins.bandcamp.com)

Twitter

@metropicks asked: Hey travellers! Don't tip if you're at a Miami Beach eatery. Restaurants/bars automatically add 15 per cent gratuity. Should they?

@novascotiarasta: Considering low-paid servers, be fair, add it upfront. Don't have them work (or not work) for tips.

@mcmounce: Gratuity inclusion should be clearly advertised but isn't as well as tourists exemption from sales tax

@RMichaelRoberts: automatic tip only if servers inform and remind customers that Tip is already applied and no further tip required

@tiikerikani: The food isn't worth the price at all, tip or not

@bhofley: Don't think so. Removes any incentive for them to provide good service.

@Lowpass: they do cause snowbirds are notoriously bad tippers and wait staff make like $7.80/hr in florida. 15% is minimum.

Follow @metropicks and take part in our daily poll.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU:
Send us your comments: londonletters@metronews.ca

metro

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Ebooks

Guillermo del Toro's Cabinet of Curiosities

By. Guillermo del Toro & Marc Zicree

Kindle/iBooks/Kobo

MIND THE APP
Kris Abel
@RealKrisAbel
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While making movies, Guillermo del Toro (Pan's Labyrinth, Pacific Rim) keeps imaginatively illustrated journals. Select pages are used here for a fascinating discussion about his influences and obsessions, with contributions by James Cameron, Tom Cruise and Alfonso Cuarón. Thankfully, you can double-tap and zoom to explore their worlds in intimate detail.

Box office

Disney freezes out demons

On a wintery weekend, Disney's Frozen retook the box-office top spot with $20.7 million US, freezing out the horror spinoff Paranormal Activity: The Marked Ones. According to studio estimates Sunday, Paramount's The Marked Ones debuted in second place with $18.2 million US, a total that includes Thursday night screenings.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Emile Hirsch, right, had to prove he belonged among the brave and brawny to land his role in Lone Survivor, which opens Friday. CONTRIBUTED

How Hirsch got huge

Lone Survivor. Actor was told he didn't have the 'physicality' to play a SEAL — cue to Rocky theme song

MATT PRIGGE
Metro World News in New York

Emile Hirsch isn't a ripped type, like his Lone Survivor castmates Mark Wahlberg and Taylor Kitsch. Yet he plays a SEAL in the adaptation of Marcus Luttrell's book, which details a mission gone disastrously awry when a quartet of soldiers went to capture or kill a Taliban leader in 2005 and wound up ambushed, fighting for their lives. Hirsch, who plays soldier Danny Dietz, says it was intensely difficult — which is exactly what he wanted.

What drew you to playing a SEAL?
A lot of people when they think of Navy SEALs, they think of this G.I. Joe type. When I read the book, I realized that's not who Danny Dietz was. He was someone I could really relate to. He was an artist. He was a great drawer. He was a quiet, serious person who was soft-spoken. But when that switch flipped he was all business.

The film isn't particularly jingoistic, but it also doesn't get into the question of whether war is just or not.
It's not a political movie. It's not a movie that dabbled in, "Should we be there?" It's on a smaller scale. It's about representing the type of person or the type of courage it takes to be one of these soldiers.

Was it difficult convincing Peter Berg to cast you as one of the toughest kinds of soldiers?
Peter Berg flat-out said to me when I first tried to get the part, "You don't have the physicality. No offence, man." I just wanted to be in the movie so badly. I didn't take no for an answer. I kept on emailing him and calling him and texting him and writing him letters. Eventually he sent me this text that just read, "Show up at Gold's early tomorrow." I wrote him back and said, "Early? What time?" No response. So I realized, "OK, this is a test." I woke up at 3:30, and I went to Gold's in Venice Beach and waited there for them to come and unlock it. The guy came at 6 to open it up. He was like, "Alright, man, come back here at 8:30, Peter will be here." So I went and took a nap at my buddy's apartment.

I went back, I just followed Peter, who was working out like a beast with a trainer. At the end of the day, Pete took me aside and was like, "How badly do you want to be in this movie?" I was like, "Really f—ing bad." He was like, "How hard do you want to work?" I said, "I'll be here every day." He said, "Alright, that's what you're going to do, six days a week." I asked if he was giving me the part. He said, "No." So I trained six days a week for hours and hours a day. It was three months before they gave me the part. They were trying to simulate an environment that would make me want to quit. I never did.

How was getting out of shape after the movie wrapped? Did your body just rebel against you?
It sucked. I tried to keep lifting and keep training. I couldn't keep my body at the same level, because you'd have to train four or five hours a day. It was a withdrawal. All of a sudden you're back to this unstructured life.

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Getting to know TV stars

Metro caught up with a few of the actors who will be on your tube this winter.

Chicago PD

Sophia Bush of Chicago PD

Who's your dream buddy cop?
I have a pretty serious obsession with Woody Harrelson's work. And he's playing a cop on his new show. I'd love to trade thoughts with him!

Favourite all-time cop show or movie theme song?
The theme song to Dragnet. Hands down.

If I was a cop for a day I'd be most excited to ____
Flip the sirens on. A lot.

ON GLOBAL
ON WEDNESDAY – 10PM ET/PT

Hawaii Five-0

Grace Park of Hawaii Five-0

Which TV cop duo or team would you most like to partner up with?
Poncho from CHiPs.

You're stranded on a deserted island – what's the one thing you would bring?
LOST DVD set.

Favourite Canadian travel destination? Favourite Canadian travel memory?
Whistler, Tofino and B.C. camping.

ON GLOBAL ON FRIDAY – 9PM ET/PT

NCIS: LA

Eric Christian Olsen of NCIS: LA

Which TV cop duo would you most like to partner up with?
CHiPs. 'Cause four wheels move the body, two wheels move the soul.

Pick a personal theme song...
Going to California by Led Zeppelin

Favourite Canadian travel destination?
Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver.

ON GLOBAL JANUARY 14 – 9PM ET/PT

Pixies surprise again with EP2

Black Francis.
Singer talks about the attention span of the digital world and hiding away to make music

PAT HEALY
Metro World News in Boston

Black Francis sat down with Metro to talk about Pixies latest release, EP2. GETTY IMAGES

After not releasing any new music for more than 20 years, the Pixies dropped EP1 in 2013 with very little lead-up time. The band did it again last Friday with EP2, four rocking new songs from the same sessions that yielded EP1, produced by Gil Norton.

Singer Black Francis says that doing a "sneak attack" release seems like the most logical way to put out music in the ever-changing digital era, an era that finds the Pixies facing a lot of internal adjustments as well. He says the events of the past year have functioned in essence to "change our whole paradigm, basically."

Founding bassist Kim Deal quit the band earlier in 2013, and the remaining members sacked replacement Kim Shattuck this fall. The Pixies singer says he was surprised with how newsworthy the splits with both Kims were.

In conversation, the man who came to prominence for cryptic lyrics that went from whispers to shouts within seconds of each other, can go from jovial to frustrated in just as little time. What sometimes reads as harsh is often tempered by a laugh, yet he seem quite steadfast in his opinions.

What was behind your idea to release your first new music in 20 years without any announcements leading up to it?
I suppose it has to do with the digital distribution of music, more than anything, and the digital distribution of news and publicity statements, for that matter. Everything happens quickly and you don't need a record company. You don't even really need a publicist! That doesn't mean that you don't use these kinds of people, but you can do everything from your iPhone, in theory.

When you release announcements like that one and when you released EP1, did you keep pressing "refresh" on your Internet browser all day to see what kind of impact you were making?
Not me, personally. I don't think anyone in the band watches this from a business point of view, in terms of the things that you could monitor. We know that our manager monitors all of these kinds of things and what he's able to put into a nice, concise email, he'll put it in and say: "So, you know that release thing that we did a while ago? Here's what happened: You sold five copies in Egypt, 100 copies in Canada, 500 copies in the U.S.A." and he'll give us the whole breakdown.

As far as musicians are concerned, we're pretty content to see what the buzz is, based on what our Twitter feed looks like, or whatever feed the various band members are tuned into. That's my particular preference, Twitter. I don't have any use for the Facebook thing. I participated in that for some years, but I just found at the end of the day it was too annoying. So I got rid of my Facebook account.

I've heard EP2 now and it does seem like the original intention was to do a full length album when you guys recorded both of these EPs, because they definitely sound like birds of a feather
Yeah. I mean, it's a season's worth of music. You go into the studio for a couple of months and you make a so-called record, whatever that is. You make a pile of songs, 15 songs, 20 songs, something like that. Bigger than a breadbox!

That was the relationship with Kim Deal. She only wanted to commit to a couple of slices of bread and we wanted to commit to a whole loaf.

We had all of this time booked [in the studio] and we had all of these songs written and demo-ed up and she was like, "I only wanna do these songs." And we were like, "[long sigh]." We've all got lives. We're all f—ing middle aged, and we don't really want to just dick around on three songs and have that be our big thing for the next six months.

We're like, "Look, we're here with the producer and we're in the same studio where they recorded Bohemian Rhapsody, for chrissakes! Let's f—ing make some music! I've got a hall pass from my wife for f—ing seven weeks! I'm going to use this pass up and by the end of the seven weeks they're going to be pissed off at me because I've been like drinking wine and painting and occasionally making music on a farm in f—ing Wales, while they've been busting ass."

You know what I'm saying?

That's the kind of world that the boys in the band were living in. We've all got kids and s—. It's like we've all got a pass to be here! Let's f—ing use it! Because I'm not going to have this pass in a couple of months. In a couple of months I'm going to be in a whole other situation.

Kate Winslet. ALL IMAGES GETTY

Lutz gets it on: Cyrus wrapped around Twilight star at end of 2013

Miley Cyrus is apparently starting the New Year with a new man in her life, having been spotted getting frisky with Twilight star Kellan Lutz at a Las Vegas nightclub just before New Year's Eve, according to E! News. "They were making out and didn't seem to care who was watching. It wasn't a secret that they were together," a source says. "She kept grabbing him throughout the night. You can tell he was into her, but at times he looked like he was uncomfortable with all the attention they were getting at the club."

Twitter

@ElizabethHurley
About to go on a 8km toboggan ride. Help....

@mindykaling
You know it's time to put away your phone when you're like: hm, what's the worst thing I could tweet that would end my career irrevocably?

@SarahKSilverman
On my tombstone I just want it to say, "I'm cold"

METRO DISH
OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

The Word

Jay and Bey's sex-toy bill will take your breath away

STARGAZING
Malene Arpe
scene@metronews.ca

Happy New Year…

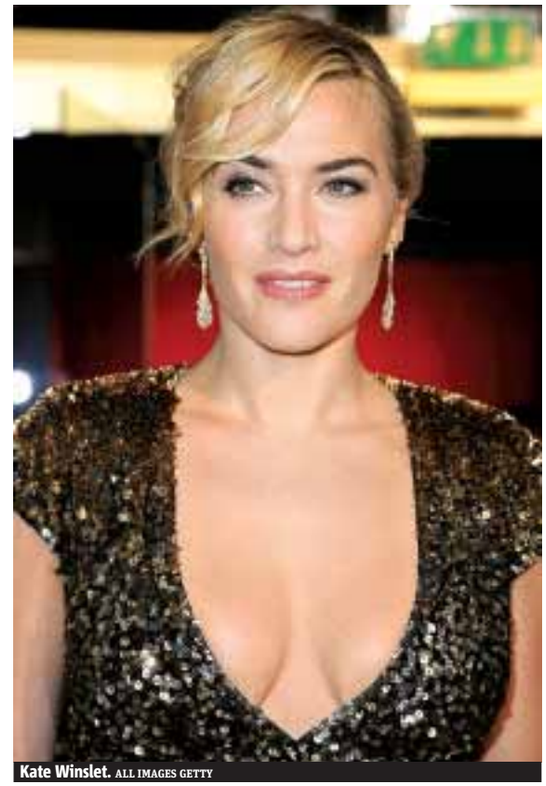
According to a report, Beyoncé and Jay Z spent $6,000 on sex toys. Perhaps someone should explain to them that there's absolutely no need for anything to be gold-plated.

Lily Allen refers to fellow pop stars as "a bunch of sterile bleeping Botoxed idiots that stank of desperation." She later apologizes and clarifies that, "I have no way of knowing whether it was Botox or Restylane."

Ariana Grande says her Twitter haters are "evil as hell." Just to clarify, Ariana Grande's personal Scale of Terrible Evil begins with "pinching" and ends with "food colour in water balloons."

Prince William will be attending Cambridge University to study agricultural management. Meanwhile, Prince Harry, following up on his trek to the South Pole, plans to have himself shot out of a cannon, work the rodeo and, in general, be 300 times cooler than his brother.

If you're bored, you may as well read my blog at thestar.com/stargazing.


Kate Winslet. ALL IMAGES GETTY

Winslet can't Bear the thought of her new son being a Rocknroll-er

Kate Winslet confirms that her first child with husband Ned Rocknroll, son Bear born last month, has her last name instead of his. "Of course we're not going to call it Rocknroll," she tells the U.K. edition of Glamour. "We haven't really had that conversation. It was always going to have my name." But lest we think Winslet has been bowing to outside pressure, rest assured the actress doesn't care what other people think. "People might judge all they like, but I'm a f—ing grown-up," Winslet says.

Talize
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10 am - 4 pm

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We look forward to meeting you.

Safety Steps

Taking children into crowded venues

Taking young children into busy and crowded venues can often make even the most confident parents feel slightly nervous. Here are three easy and effective tips to ensure safety in crowds.

- Slip your business card in your children's pockets.
- With a marker, write your cell number on the back of your children's hand.
- For up-to-date ID purposes, take a photo of each of your children with your phone. Should you become separated from a child, it will be much easier for you to be reconnected. EVELYN HANNON, YUMMYMUMMYCLUB.CA

Exclusively online

Read the latest Metro content from Lyranda Martin Evans and Fiona Stevenson, authors of the hilarious, best-selling book Reasons Mommy Drinks, at metronews.ca/voices.

Don't clip tooth fairy's wings

Timing. A mom explains why she, and her daughter, aren't ready for the truth about that tiny fairy who leaves money in return for teeth lost by kids

SIDURA LUDWIG
YummyMummyClub.ca

Your kids will give you cues when they're ready to hear the truth about the tooth fairy truth. ISTOCK

The other day, I lied to my daughter.

Every once in a while, she likes to go on this website called therealtoothfairies.com. She has a favourite tooth fairy, Avalane, and has been known to write her letters. At night, I take the letters out from under her pillow and put back a note, usually written in cursive so she won't recognize my handwriting.

I have mixed feelings about our scenario.

I don't like that she's found a website that basically dictates to her how she should imagine the tooth fairy. The website also charges to upgrade to different activities, which she knows I flat out refuse to allow her to do.

Does the tooth fairy really need to be more commercial than the toonie she gets under her pillow when she loses a tooth?

However, I have no problem in general with the concept for a tooth fairy. And let's face it: realizing that the tooth fairy is just your parents is one of those rites-of-passage into older childhood. She's six. I want her to stay young for as long as she can.

Recently, after fiddling around on her favourite website and printing out a copy of her latest letter, she said to me, "Mommy, is it really just you sending me the letters?"

Usually I parent by the philosophy, "If they're old enough to ask, they're old enough to know."

So, at first I said "Yes."

And then I saw her face. She was frozen. Her mouth did not turn up into that "I knew it!" smile.

She looked like she was willing herself not to process my words. Her eyes searched mine. She said it again, "No really, mommy. Is it you sending me the letters?"

And then I got it. She wasn't ready yet. And she was giving me a way out.

So I lied: "I'm the one who passes your letters onto the tooth fairy and makes sure they get there."

That's when she smiled. "Oh! OK. Because everyone at school says there's no such thing as the tooth fairy — that it's just your parents.

"I tell them, 'No! My parents don't have wings! My mother's name isn't Avalane!'"

And she ran off to put her latest letter under her pillow.

I think she knows her time will come when she won't believe this anymore.

I remember the night her older brother came downstairs and said, "It's just you guys, right?" He had the "I knew it!" smile.

I think she might even know this is a game she and I play together, that as soon as she admits to knowing, the game will stop.

Recently, she woke me early to decode the cursive in the letter she found under her pillow. Avalane told her she can't wait until her current wiggly tooth falls out, and that believing is something you feel in your heart (thank you, classic Disney).

She took the letter back from me, held it against her chest and then skipped off with that smile.

YUMMYMUMMYCLUB.CA IS AN ONLINE RESOURCE THAT HELPS BUSY WOMEN TO SURVIVE MOTHERHOOD

Pregnancy: It's not all about swollen ankles

In pregnancy, there's lots to complain about: nausea, back pain, high blood pressure, low blood pressure, swollen ankles, swollen feet, swollen everything, weight gain, constipation, random hairs, pubic-bone pain, vagina pain, breast pain, everything-on-your-body pain, sleeplessness, nightmares, night sweats; the list goes on. But there are also perks!

There is stuff you can't do
Trust me, this can be a good thing. "I'm sorry, I'd love to change the cat litter, but I guess that's off my to-do list for the next 40 weeks." Or, "Yikes, I'd love to clean the toilet but I probably shouldn't expose myself to harsh chemicals."

Your boobs look great
The rest of your body might feel crappy, but these new buoyant breasts are a fun perk, even if they're too tender for your significant other to touch. They look great, so enjoy them.

You call the shots
No matter what, you win because you're growing a human and nothing can trump that. Your significant other says, "I had such a bad day at work." You can reply: "Yeah, me too. Plus, it felt like someone was carving hieroglyphics into my cervix with an ice pick. Did I mention I'm growing a human? Do you mind getting dinner started?"

Random rage is justified
This is pretty self explanatory.

You can end unwanted conversations quickly
If you're in the middle of a boring conversation, you can excuse yourself with lines like, "Sorry, I just got kicked in the bladder. There is a very good chance I might pee myself if I don't go to the bathroom immediately."

You're growing a human
At the end of the day, this is what it comes down to, right? I mean, how freaky and sci-fi cool is it that you're growing a human being inside of you? Fingernails are developing, brain cells, lung fibres, bones, a heart, eyelashes... Blows. My. Mind.

Back pains aside, you're growing a life. How amazing! ISTOCK

JEN WARMAN, YUMMYMUMMYCLUB.CA

Flash food. Flank Steak with Shiitake Mushrooms & Hoisin Sauce

This recipe serves four. MIKE MCCOLL, FROM THE BEST OF ROSE REISMAN (WHITECAP BOOKS)

ROSE REISMAN
For more, visit rosereisman.com or follow her on twitter @rosereisman

One of my favourite dinners for the family is a lean sliced steak with a tasty sauce and a salad to start your meal.

You can enjoy meat at least twice a week and still eat healthy — providing you're eating the right cut of beef. My go-to steak is flank since it's tender, lean and quick cooking. Consider that six ounces of flank steak has only five grams of saturated fat compared to a rib steak that has 14 grams.

There's a lot more artery clogging fat when you indulge in the fattier cut.

If you have the time, you can tenderize the flank steak by marinating in a light bottled salad dressing or any oil and acidic ingredient such as balsamic vinegar or lemon juice. Add some herbs and spices of your choice. The steak will always be more tender if you can marinate it in the morning or the night before.

If you don't have sweet rice vinegar or mirin, you can use regular rice vinegar and add one tablespoon of sugar and heat gently to dissolve. Chinese five-spice powder is available in the dried herb section of your supermarket. It's a combination of cinnamon, star anise, cloves, pepper and fennel. If you don't have shiitake mushrooms, feel free to use another mushroom of your choice such as button, oyster or brown, being sure to cook the mushrooms until all the moisture evaporates.

I love my steaks served medium rare, which is about 130 F. Use a meat thermometer to test the doneness. Remember that the steak continues cooking for about 10 minutes after you remove it from the heat, so don't overcook it.

If you want a grain alongside the steak, try brown rice or soba or rice noodles.

Nutritional information

Per serving: 429 calories; 21.4 g carbohydrates; 4.7 g fibre; 41 g protein; 18 g total fat; 6.6 g saturated fat; 111 mg cholesterol; 680 mg sodium

Ingredients

Mushroom Hoisin Sauce
- 1/3 cup sweet rice wine vinegar or mirin
- 1 1/2 tsp Chinese five-spice powder
- 1/3 cup hoisin sauce
- 2 tbsp toasted sesame seeds
- 3 tbsp rice vinegar
- 2 tbsp low-sodium soy sauce
- 2 tbsp sesame oil

- 1 lb whole shiitake mushrooms, cleaned with stem removed
- 2 green onions, sliced for garnish
- 1 1/2 lb flank steak

Directions

1. Combine mirin, five-spice powder, hoisin, sesame seeds, vinegar, soy sauce and sesame oil. Pour 1/4 cup of the sauce over the flank steak, letting it marinate while you cook the mushrooms.

2. In a large skillet sprayed with vegetable oil, sauté mushrooms 12 minutes or until tender. Add another 1/4 cup of the sauce and cook one minute.

3. In a grill pan sprayed with vegetable oil, grill steak on medium-high heat 8 minutes per side or until done to your preference. Let sit 10 minutes.

4. Slice steak against grain into thin slices, scatter the whole mushrooms overtop, garnish with the green onions. Serve with the remaining sauce. **THE BEST OF ROSE REISMAN (WHITECAP BOOKS) BY ROSE REISMAN**

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You've been canned, what's the plan?

Get to the bottom of your boot. What to do after you've been terminated from your job

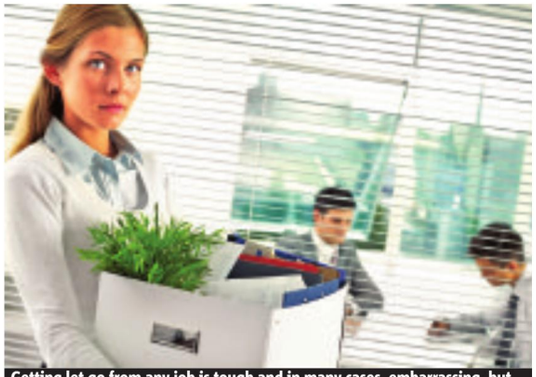
PARISA NIKFARJAM
TalentEgg.ca

When you're just getting your foot in the door, the hardest thing to contemplate is being fired.

Knowing your rights and obligations during an otherwise uncertain and difficult time will help when transitioning from one job to another.

The following is a snapshot of some of the issues for you to be aware when you've lost your job:

Is the termination lawful?
While it is the employer's prerogative to dismiss employees at any time (by either having cause or providing notice or payment in lieu of notice), not all dismissals are lawful.



Getting let go from any job is tough and in many cases, embarrassing, but that shouldn't dissuade you from assessing your termination and ensuring that it accords with applicable laws. ISTOCK

It is therefore crucial to determine why you've been fired. If any of the following occurs, your dismissal may not be justifiable. The following restrictions apply to Ontario only. Provincial laws vary:

- Dismissal is based on a prohibited ground under the Ontario Human Rights Code, such as disability, age, sex or sexual orientation.
- Dismissal follows a complaint of harassment or violence in the workplace.
- Dismissal follows a complaint under the Employment Standards Act, 2000 (ESA) including payment of wages and overtime pay.
- Dismissal occurs during leaves of absence such as pregnancy leave and emergency leave, or immediately thereafter.

The Twitter tirade

While this is an emotionally charged time, voicing your frustration with your previous employer on social media may not be in your best interests.

- In fact, as a recently dismissed employee learned, it may result in a reduction to the settlement award they would have received from their employer. It is important to note that post-termination arrangements are confidential, particularly when dealing with negotiations and settlements.

If your dismissal is based on any of the above, remember that any legal remedy you have may carry a time limitation, so it is best that you consult with legal counsel or start the appropriate process as soon as possible.

Entitlement to termination pay
Your employment may come to an end for "just cause" or "without cause."

If you've been fired for just cause, the employer has ended the relationship for a particular reason such as theft, illegal activity, excessive lying, workplace violence or other inappropriate behaviour. In this circumstance, you're not entitled to any payment as a result of your termination. These terminations are often contentious. It is important to seek legal advice if this is the basis of your termination, as you may have been wrongfully dismissed.

If you've been fired without cause, the employment relationship has been terminated but not necessarily as a result of your actions. This is often the case where the employer is downsizing or where the relationship just isn't a good fit. In Ontario, in this case you have minimum entitlements under the Employment Standards Act, 2000 (ESA).

There is an entitlement to notice (or pay in lieu), which is based on your length of service (one week per year of service), and is currently capped at eight weeks' compensation.

In some circumstances, you may also have a right to statutory severance pay once you've worked for more than five years.

If your employment contract does not restrict your entitlements to these minimum standards, you may wish to negotiate for a more generous termination package that considers your length of service, your age, the nature of your position and the availability of comparable alternative employment.

On top of notice or pay in lieu of notice, you are also entitled to benefits for at least your minimum notice period under the ESA, so you should ensure that this is a part of your termination package. If you have received less than what you are entitled to, you may also have been wrongfully dismissed.

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OHL

Knights' Domi named Ontario's best for December

The London Knights' Max Domi has been named the Ontario Hockey League player of the month for December.

Domi ended the month with 23 points in 10 games.

He's showed a solid start in January, with eight points — all from assists — in two games. Four of those points came as the Knights defeated the Mississauga Steelheads 7-1.

Domi now has 57 points in 33 games on the season.

The Knights take the ice again Friday on the road in Guelph. METRO

Luge

Canadians take silver ahead of Sochi Games

Canada continued to push towards its first Olympic luge medal, winning silver in the team relay at a World Cup event on Sunday in Konigssee, Germany.

Sam Edney, Alex Gough and Justin Snith, all from Calgary, and Tristan Walker of Cochrane, Alta., joined forces to win silver in two minutes 44.499 seconds. THE CANADIAN PRESS

NHL

Malkin makes immediate impact in return

Evgeni Malkin woke up Sunday morning, texted Pittsburgh Penguins coach Dan Bylsma and told him he was good to go after missing nine games because of an ailing left leg.

Sure looked like it.

The Russian star scored twice and added an assist, helping the Penguins rally past Winnipeg 6-5 to extend their home winning streak to 12 straight. James Neal added two goals and Jussi Jokinen scored for the third time in the last two games as Pittsburgh's second line kept the Penguins in it until Matt Niskanen's slap shot with 7:22 remaining won it.

"It's always a big boost when you get a guy like (Malkin) back," Neal said. "Myself and Jussi were obviously excited. We try to feed off that. It looked like he didn't miss a beat out there." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Richardson wins clash of titans

NBL Canada. Former NBA greats meet on sidelines as coaches

On Sunday

120	108
Lightning	SkyHawks

DAVE LANGFORD
dave.langford@metronews.ca

It was a basketball fan's dream.

At one end of the court was Jaren Jackson, he of the 1999 NBA championship fame with San Antonio Spurs, playing alongside Tim Duncan and David Robinson. That was one of his nine NBA teams.

He is now the head coach of the Ottawa SkyHawks.

And on the other end of the floor was four-time NBA all-star Micheal Ray Richardson, who played eight seasons, most notably with the New York Knicks and New Jersey Nets.

He is now in his third year behind the bench of the London Lightning with two National Basketball League of Canada championships under his belt.

On this particular Sunday, the victory went to Richardson as the Lightning improved to 15-6 with a 120-108 win over Jackson and the SkyHawks before 3,250 at Budweiser Gardens. The SkyHawks are now 12-12.

The bantering between the two NBA veterans went all game long and became part of the show.

"He can talk to you, and I can't talk to you?" Richardson said as Jackson and referee Paul Carter chatted. The veteran referee then took Jackson a few feet westward and engaged the two showstoppers at once.

"I got two timeouts?" Jackson asked timekeeper Bill Smith later in the game. "Should I take one?" he then asked Smith.

He then turned to Richardson: "Could you take one for me?"

Jackson said the exchanges with Richardson are part of the show.

"It's the new year, and we're trying to keep it light out there because I played the game and (Richardson) played the game as well and we know all these players want to put on a good show and enjoy the game," he said.

Richardson said he has known Jackson for a long time.

"Me and Jaren go way back. He's a former NBA player, and we see each other in the summer time at the player association meetings," he said. "So he and I are real, real good friends

"It's entertainment and the fans come to enjoy it. I mean it's a show."

Garrett Williamson had 23 points and Elvin Mims 17 to lead the Lightning. Stefan Welsh led the SkyHawks with 29 points and Justin Tubbs added 20.

London's Tim Ellis goes up for two during Sunday's match against the Ottawa SkyHawks at Budweiser Gardens. ANGELA MULLINS/METRO

NFL. Niners kick Packers out of playoffs

The Niners' Phil Dawson celebrates his 33-yard, game-winning field goal on Sunday in Green Bay, Wis. GETTY IMAGES

Phil Dawson kicked a 33-yard field goal as time expired, and Colin Kaepernick threw for 227 yards and ran for another 98 to lead the San Francisco 49ers past the Green Bay Packers 23-20 on Sunday night in a frigid NFC wild-card game.

In a back-and-forth fourth quarter, the 49ers (13-4) threw the final punch. Kaepernick escaped a blitz on third-and-eight and scrambled for an 11-yard gain to the 27 with 1:13 left. Dawson nailed the winning kick five plays later.

The defending NFC champions came away with a huge win in conditions that resembled a meat locker.

San Francisco plays at Carolina next Sunday.

Mason Crosby's 24-yard field goal tied it at 20 for the Packers (8-8-1) with 5:06 left before the 49ers' final drive.

Until then, Packers quarterback Aaron Rodgers did his best to turn into "Captain Comeback" again, finishing with 177 yards and a touchdown on 17 of 26 passing attempts. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NFL

Rivers pours water on Bengals' hopes

Philip Rivers' gloved hands found the right touch in the January cold.

The Bengals? Still can't do anything right when it's playoff time.

San Diego took advantage of Andy Dalton's three turnovers in the second half on Sunday, pulling away to a 27-10 victory that extended the Bengals' stretch of playoff misery to 23 years and counting. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

4 SPORTS

Russian defenceman Nikita Tryamkin and Curtis Lazar of Canada collide during the bronze-medal game of the world junior hockey championship in Malmo, Sweden, on Sunday. FRANK GUNN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canada runs into Russian roadblock

World juniors. Canucks lose bronze-medal game to finish fourth for second straight year

There is hope for next year's team, but that didn't make it easier for the Canadian players that left the world junior championship without a medal for a second year in a row.

A bid for a first gold medal in five years had died with a 5-1 loss to Finland in the semi-finals, and a 2-1 loss to Russia in the bronze-medal game on Sunday left captain Scott Laughton and his teammates in a gloomy mood.

"When you put on this crest and try to represent your country and can't even bring a medal back to Canada to the people who've been cheering for you, and have 4,000 fans come down here, it's heartbreaking," said Laughton.

Mikhail Grigorenko got a lucky goal off Mathew Dumba's skate and Eduard Gimatov wired a shot to the top corner in the first period, but Canada could only answer with defenceman Josh Morrissey's first of the tournament midway through the third period against sharp Russian goalie Andrei Vasilevski.

It was the second year in a row Canada lost a bronze-medal game to Russia after a 6-5 setback last year in the Russian city of Ufa. And it marked the first time Canada has gone without a medal at this event in consecutive years since it happened three years in a row from 1979 to 1981.

The support was there from the start from hundreds of red-and-white clad Canadian fans who went to Sweden to cheer on a team that turned out to be too young, too unlucky and perhaps not talented enough to win this year's tournament.

But next year may be different when it is held in Montreal and Toronto.

Canada brought its second youngest team ever to Malmo — only the team that was disqualified in 1987 for a brawl with the Soviets was younger. But 11 of them, led by phenom Connor McDavid, are eligible for the 2015 tournament.

"No one's thinking about next year," said goalie Zach Fucale, who is also among those 11. "We wanted to get something done this year. We had a chance to win and we didn't."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

No excuses

"Age is irrelevant because it is the best we had in our country. It's just the way it's set up."

Brent Sutter, head coach of Team Canada

Three-time champs

Finland finishes first

Buffalo Sabres defenceman Rasmus Ristolainen scored at 9:42 of overtime to give Finland its third world junior hockey title, 3-2 over Sweden on Sunday.

Ristolainen picked up the puck along the right boards, beat defenceman Robert Hagg as he cut in front of the goal and slid a backhander under goalie Oscar Dansk's right leg pad.

Finland also won the under-20 event in 1987 in Czechoslovakia and in 1998 at home in Helsinki.

Sweden tied it at 2-2 on a Christian Djoos' power-play goal with 9:07 left in the third period. Djoos beat goalie Juuse Saros with a slap shot through traffic from the high slot.

Sweden's Filip Forsberg was selected the tournament's most valuable player. The Nashville forward had four goals and eight assists in seven games. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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NHL

EASTERN CONFERENCE

ATLANTIC DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Boston	42	28	12	2	124	89	58
Tampa Bay	41	25	12	4	116	95	54
Montreal	43	24	14	5	112	102	53
Detroit	43	19	14	10	114	121	48
Toronto	43	21	17	5	119	127	47
Ottawa	44	19	18	7	126	141	45
Florida	42	16	20	6	101	134	38
Buffalo	42	12	26	4	74	118	28

METROPOLITAN DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Pittsburgh	44	31	12	1	142	103	63
Philadelphia	42	21	17	4	111	116	46
Washington	42	20	16	6	128	128	46
NY Rangers	43	21	20	2	105	115	44
Carolina	42	17	16	9	103	123	43
New Jersey	43	17	18	8	101	110	42
Columbus	42	18	20	4	113	123	40
NY Islanders	43	14	22	7	112	143	35

Sunday's results
Pittsburgh 6 Winnipeg 5
Nashville at Carolina
Tampa Bay at Edmonton
San Jose at Chicago
Vancouver at Anaheim
Saturday's results
Boston 4 Winnipeg 1
Colorado 4 San Jose 3
Florida 5 Nashville 4 (SO)
Buffalo 2 New Jersey 1
NY Rangers 7 Toronto 1
Ottawa 4 Montreal 3 (OT)
Carolina 3 NY Islanders 2
Detroit 5 Dallas 1
Minnesota 5 Washington 3
St. Louis 6 Columbus 2
Philadelphia 5 Phoenix 3
Los Angeles 3 Vancouver 1
Monday's games — All Times Eastern
Dallas at NY Islanders, 7 p.m.
Columbus at NY Rangers, 7 p.m.
Florida at Montreal, 7:30 p.m.
Calgary at Colorado, 9 p.m.
Tuesday's games
Carolina at Buffalo, 7 p.m.
NY Islanders at Toronto, 7 p.m.
Philadelphia at New Jersey, 7:30 p.m.
Tampa Bay at Winnipeg, 8 p.m.
San Jose at Nashville, 8 p.m.
Calgary at Phoenix, 9 p.m.
St. Louis at Edmonton, 9:30 p.m.
Boston at Anaheim, 10 p.m.
Pittsburgh at Vancouver, 10 p.m.
Minnesota at Los Angeles, 10:30 p.m.

WESTERN CONFERENCE

CENTRAL DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Chicago	44	29	7	8	165	121	66
St. Louis	41	29	7	5	150	95	63
Colorado	41	26	11	4	120	104	56
Minnesota	44	22	17	5	106	113	49
Dallas	41	20	14	7	120	124	47
Winnipeg	45	19	21	5	123	135	43
Nashville	42	18	18	6	101	127	42

PACIFIC DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Anaheim	43	30	8	5	142	108	65
San Jose	42	26	10	6	139	109	58
Los Angeles	43	26	13	4	113	89	56
Vancouver	43	23	13	7	114	104	53
Phoenix	41	20	12	9	123	127	49
Calgary	41	14	21	6	96	128	34
Edmonton	44	13	26	5	112	153	31

Note: Two points for a win, one point for overtime loss.

SCORING LEADERS

	G	A	Pts
Crosby, Pgh	23	39	62
Kane, Chi	23	31	54
Getzlaf, Ana	20	27	47
Thornton, SJ	5	42	47
Kunitz, Pgh	23	23	46
Tavares, NYI	17	29	46
Backstrom, Wash	10	36	46
Sharp, Chi	25	20	45
Ovechkin, Wash	31	12	43
Perry, Ana	22	21	43
Toews, Chi	15	28	43
Okposo, NYI	16	26	42
Keith, Chi	3	39	42
Seguin, Dal	21	20	41
Marleau, SJ	19	22	41
Malkin, Pgh	9	32	41

Not including last night's games

NFL

PLAYOFFS

WILD CARD

Sunday's results
San Diego 27 Cincinnati 10
San Francisco 23 Green Bay 20
Saturday's results
Indianapolis 45 Kansas City 44
New Orleans 26 Philadelphia 24

NBA

EASTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	GB
d-Indiana	27	6	.818	—
d-Miami	26	8	.765	1½
Atlanta	18	16	.529	9½
d-Toronto	16	16	.500	10½
Washington	14	17	.452	12
Chicago	14	18	.438	12½
Charlotte	15	20	.429	13
Detroit	14	20	.412	13½
Boston	13	20	.394	14
Brooklyn	12	21	.364	15
Philadelphia	12	21	.364	15
Cleveland	11	23	.324	16½
New York	10	22	.313	16½
Orlando	10	23	.303	17
Milwaukee	7	26	.212	20

WESTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	GB
d-Oklahoma City	26	7	.788	—
Portland	26	8	.765	1/2
d-San Antonio	26	8	.765	1/2
d-Golden State	23	13	.639	4½
L.A. Clippers	23	13	.639	4½
Houston	22	13	.629	5
Phoenix	20	12	.625	5½
Dallas	19	14	.576	7
Minnesota	16	17	.485	10
Denver	15	17	.469	10½
New Orleans	15	17	.469	10½
Memphis	15	18	.455	11
L.A. Lakers	14	19	.424	12
Sacramento	10	22	.313	15½
Utah	11	25	.306	16½

d - division leader
Sunday's results
Memphis 112 Detroit 84
Golden State 112 Washington 96
Miami 102 Toronto 97
Indiana 82 Cleveland 78
Boston at Oklahoma City
New York at Dallas
Denver at L.A. Lakers
Saturday's results
Indiana 99 New Orleans 82
Miami 110 Orlando 94
Brooklyn 89 Cleveland 82
Chicago 91 Atlanta 84
Oklahoma City 115 Minnesota 111
San Antonio 116 L.A. Clippers 92
Phoenix 116 Milwaukee 100
Charlotte 113 Sacramento 103
Philadelphia 101 Portland 99
Monday's games — All Times Eastern
Minnesota at Philadelphia, 7 p.m.
Atlanta at Brooklyn, 7:30 p.m.
Orlando at L.A. Clippers, 10:30 p.m.

Horoscopes

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
What you gain over the coming week will more than make up for what you have lost, so be of good cheer. Sometimes something has to go out of your life before something new can come in.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
A relationship that has fallen into a rut can be spiced up again but it won't happen if you keep looking back to the past.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
It will pay you to not be quite so open about what you are doing and why. You don't have to be dishonest but you do have to keep information that could be useful to rivals.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
You are about to make a vital decision, one that could change the course of your life. It may not be the change itself that worries you so much as how others will react. Don't worry, they'll get used to it.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
There may be tension in the air over the next few days and it may linger until Mercury changes signs next weekend. It won't cause you any major problems but try not to snap at people for no reason.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
Some may find it hard to believe you are in touch with your emotions and that's good because if you rely entirely on your rational mind today you could miss out. Let your heart rule your head.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
You may think that you can do as you please and get away with it but the planets warn if you go too far today you could create a backlash that is tough to contain. Play it safe.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
The choices you make over the next few days will have a major impact on the direction your life takes over the next few months, so make them wisely.

♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
There may have been some confusion of late but you should find it easy to set the record straight today. If your remarks have been taken out of context make sure everyone knows it.

♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
It is important that you tell the truth today, even if by doing so you cause yourself, and maybe others, a certain amount of grief.

♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
You tend to fear the worst at this time of year, so don't be surprised if you find yourself a bit hesitant as the new week begins. The good news is that come the weekend you'll be your old self again.

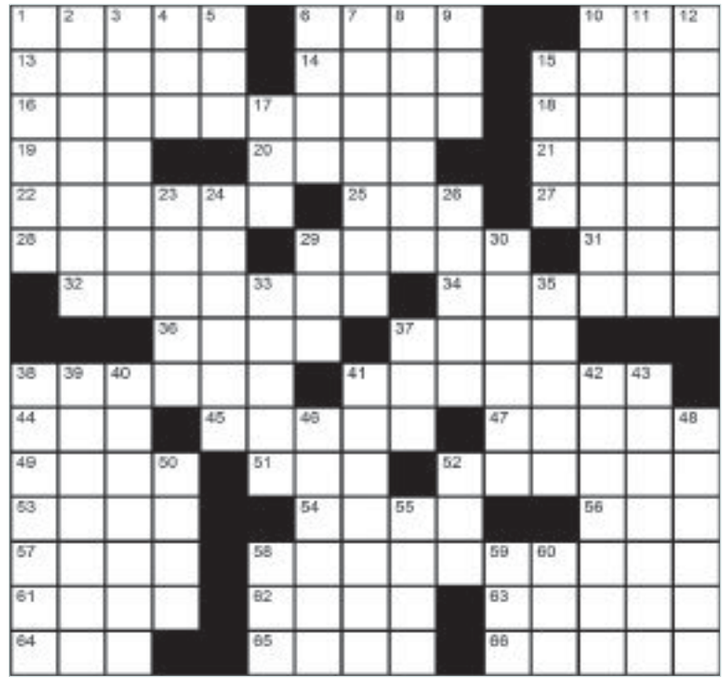
♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
An important arrangement may have to be changed late today but don't get angry because it will work in your favour. Strange as it may seem but your friends really do know what is best for you.

SALLY BROMPTON

Crossword: Canada Across and Down

See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers.

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



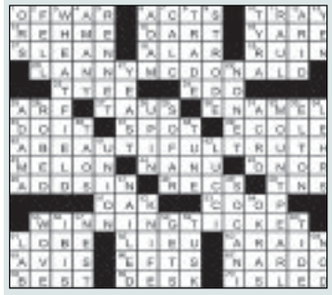
Across

1. Talk show host Mr. Smiley
6. Wile E. Coyote's supplier
10. Low-__ (Dieter's choice)
13. Excursus
14. Bok __ (Vegetable)
15. Healthy, in Spain
16. Medical drama on CTV: 2 wds.
18. Play interlude, __'acte
19. Greek alphabet's 7th letter
20. Sales jobs, commonly
21. Ms. Falco
22. Empathize
25. Play on words
27. Metal band, Quiet __
28. When doubled, Barbra Streisand's 'married lady' song from film Funny Girl
29. Half-hearted
31. Behave
32. __ Station, Nova Scotia
34. "I'm Gonna __ Good!" by Shania Twain
36. City of Spain
37. Ms. Remini
38. Pinned-at 'toy', __ doll
41. Fuel-finding drills: 2 wds.
44. Sovereignly sort, shortly
45. Preps teeth for fillings
47. Thanks: French
49. Comfy
51. Pre-1947 British rule in India
52. Don't yield from a stance: 2 wds.
53. Scrabble piece
54. 'Smart' suffix
56. Feline's fluff
57. "As if!": 2 wds.
58. Posh neighbourhood of Ottawa, __ Park
61. "Young __" (1988)
62. Intro-to-drawing class, __ _
63. The States = _ _ __ _
64. Cornerstone abbr.
65. "Excuse me..."
66. Retro record

Down

1. Policing weapons
2. Together, sports-style: 3 wds.
3. Baroque composer nicknamed 'The Red Priest'
4. Forest's Oscar-winning role
5. John McCain, e.g.
6. Yearn
7. Food Network culinary competition series, "__ Canada"
8. Cleans the floor's mess: 2 wds.
9. Middle
10. City on the South Shore near the Island of Montreal
11. Capital city of ancient Syria
12. Country star Ms. Lynn
15. Clairvoyant
17. Athens' country, to the IOC
23. Had a cold
24. Non-stick coating in cookware
26. Mr. Bruce who played Dr. Watson in Sherlock Holmes films
29. __-la-la!
30. "Goodness gracious...": 2 wds.
33. Smell
35. Burglar
37. Fleur-de-__ [var. sp.]
38. Trace of something
39. Author's anthology
40. Luxurious
41. Items and things
42. Canadian Forces helicopter, CH-146 __
43. Like a pre-grooming dog
46. Houses for lords
48. Jennifer Lopez hit: 2 wds.
50. Acquires
52. Grad letters
55. Comedian's play-like routine
58. Knock the door
59. Adore, informally
60. "It ___." (Fancy response to "Who's there?")

Friday's Crossword

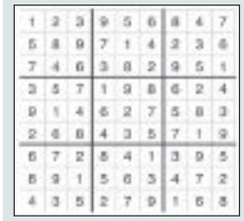


Sudoku

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.

	9		5		6		2	
2			7		9			1
	4			3			8	
		2				8		
3	7						5	4
		5				7		
	2			6			3	
1			2		5			8
	5		3		4		9	

Friday's Sudoku



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